

the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to prevent abandonment of this application, then such extensions of time are hereby petitioned for under 37 C.F.R. § 1.136(a), and any fees required therefore are hereby authorized to be charged to our Deposit Account 20-0823.

Please amend the above-identified application as set forth below.

***In The Specification:***

Please amend the specification as indicated:

At page 1, after the title and before the heading "Background of the Invention" insert the following paragraph:

—This application is a continuation in part of prior U.S. application Serial No. 09/034,756, filed March 4, 1998, now U.S. Patent No. 6,392,028, issued May 21, 2002; which is a continuation of U.S. application Ser. No. 08/811,566, filed March 4, 1997, now U.S. Patent No. 6,127,116, issued October 3, 2000; which claims priority to Provisional application Ser. No. 60/039,843, filed March 4, 1997, now abandoned.—

At page 2 please replace the paragraph beginning at line 11 with the following paragraph:

— Although interferon (IFN)- $\alpha$  has been shown to be useful for the treatment of a minority of patients with chronic HCV infections [Davis et al., *N. Engl. J. Med.* **321**, 1501-1506 (1989); DiBisceglie et al., *N. Engl. J. Med.* **321**, 1506-1510 (1989)] and subunit vaccines show some promise in the chimpanzee model [Choo et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* **91**, 1294-1298 (1994)], future efforts are needed to develop more effective therapies and vaccines. The considerable diversity observed among different HCV isolates [for review, see Bukh et al., *Sem. Liver Dis.* **15**, 41-63 (1995)], the emergence of genetic variants in chronically infected individuals [Enomoto et al., *J. Hepatol.* **17**, 415-416 (1993); Hijikata et al., *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Comm.* **175**, 220-228 (1991); Kato et al., *Biochem. Biophys. Res. Comm.* **189**, 119-127 (1992); Kato et al., *J. Virol.* **67**, 3923-3930 (1993); Kurosaki et al., *Hepatology* **18**, 1293-1299 (1993); Lesniewski et al., *J. Med. Virol.* **40**, 150-156 (1993); Ogata et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* **88**, 3392-3396 (1991); Weiner et al., *Virology* **180**, 842-848 (1991); Weiner et al., *Proc. Natl. Acad. Sci. USA* **89**, 3468-3472 (1992)], and the lack of protective immunity